EXAMINATION OF LEARNING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN INTERGENERATIONAL STUDENTS IN AN AFTER SCHOOL ART PROGRAM

Susan Whiteland, B.A.

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APPROVED:

D. Jack Davis, Major Professor
Christina Bain, Committee Member
Rina Kundu, Committee Member
Kelly Donahue-Wallace, Chair of the Department of Art Education and Art History
Robert Milnes, Dean of the College of Visual Arts and Design
Michael Monticino, Interim Dean of the Robert B. Toulouse School of Graduate Studies
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Learning relationships between intergenerational students in an after school art program provided mutual benefits for participants in Denton, Texas. This qualitative case study of older, active adults and elementary students involved in visual art experiences gives insight to a contextual learning environment that fosters lifelong learning and addresses the interpersonal issues of an aging society.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES........................................................................................................................................ iv

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS....................................................................................................................... v

Chapters

1. **INTRODUCTION**.............................................................................................................................. 1

2. **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE** ................................................................. 7
   - Lifelong Learning
   - Intergenerational Learning
   - Contextual Learning Theory
   - Intergenerational Visual Art Programs

3. **METHODOLOGY** .......................................................................................................................... 26
   - Sources of Data
   - Data Collection
   - Data Analysis
   - Validity
   - Limitations

4. **FINDINGS** ................................................................................................................................. 35
   - Lifelong Learning Participants
   - Sharing of Values, Attitudes and Beliefs
   - Cooperation/Collaboration
   - Motivation
   - Risk Taking/Playing
   - Summary

5. **CONCLUSION** ............................................................................................................................ 56
   - The Problem
   - Aim of Research Study
   - Data Discovery
   - Implications

APPENDICES ........................................................................................................................................ 66

BIBLIOGRAPHY ..................................................................................................................................... 86
LIST OF TABLES

1. Children Participants ........................................................................................................... 31
2. Adult Participants .................................................................................................................. 31
# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>First Class Day Circle Ice Breaker</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Tiling Work on Group Mosaic</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Folding Memory Book Page</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Grouting Group Mosaic</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Memory Book Page Responses</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Group Mosaic</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Learning relationships between intergenerational students in an after school art program provided mutual benefits for participants in Denton, Texas. This qualitative case study of older, active adults and elementary students involved in visual art experiences gives insight to a contextual learning environment that fosters lifelong learning and addresses the interpersonal issues of an aging society.

Lifelong learning and intergenerational learning fall within the scope of contextual learning. Johnson (2002) describes contextual learning as antithetical to the Newtonian worldview of the 18th century that purports that the whole is the sum of its individual parts. Johnson says that it is the relationship between the parts or the context that gives meaning. An example of components compared to the whole can be realized when one looks at the unique life-sustaining properties of water compared to water’s component parts of oxygen and hydrogen alone. It is the relationship of the components that gives water its unique life-sustaining ability. Similarly, one can examine the relationships of the components that make up the educational process to the potential for meaningful learning.

Johnson (2002) explains that context may also be thought of as the patterns formed through relationships created within one’s immediate environment. He says that neuroscience claims that the brain tries to give new information significance by connecting the details with existing knowledge. In an effort to draw meaning from its environment the brain weaves patterns. Johnson believes this process makes the brain more powerful. The brain’s neurons strengthen existing neuronal connections and make new dendrites or pathways to pave the
way for future knowledge building. Following Johnson’s premise regarding contextual learning, students’ learning in the arts could provide the connections for new information with their existing knowledge.

Davis (2007) defines the term intergenerational as the involvement of different generations or age categories. It suggests an interaction, connection, linkage, joining, and sharing of and among different generations. Intergenerational learning, therefore, implies the learning that takes place for members of different generations as they interact with one another. West (2004) describes lifelong learning as more than adaptability or a remarketing of self as a commodity. Wage earning is not of primary importance for the lifelong learner. West adds that lifelong learning provides an alternative to feeling overwhelmed, stuck and powerless. It is a process dependent on the help and support of others who encourage and challenge through risk taking. West says that success in this endeavor depends on having a secure space for imaginative play and the opportunity to experiment with new ideas.

The Center for Occupational Research and Development (2007) says that learning occurs only when students process new information in such a way that it makes sense to them in their own frame of reference. Therefore, learning environments may include a classroom, a laboratory, computer lab, or any number of locations that provide social, cultural, physical and psychological experiences (Center for Occupational Research and Development, 2007).

More research is needed on the role that intergenerational learning plays in art education programs as evidenced by several national research agendas in the arts. The National Art Education Association (NAEA) sets student learning as a priority for research. Included in the agenda is a call for research that addresses lifelong learning in a variety of contexts including
after school programs. In *Creating a Visual Arts Education Research Agenda Towards the 21st Century Adopted 1994*, NAEA spells out the recommendations and emphasizes that, “Research efforts will be directed at all levels of art education, from preschool through lifelong learning, in a variety of contexts both within and beyond schools, from a variety of populations” (1994, p. 2).

While learning across the age spectrum and in varied contexts are areas cited by the NAEA as being of primary importance in research, The Arts Education Partnership (AEP) supports the need for art education research that focuses on students developing understanding and empathy for other people. Self-identity and collaboration, along with building relationships with others, are areas where research is being sought (Goals 2000 Arts Education Partnership, 1997).

The current chair for the NAEA Committee on Lifelong Learning in Art Education, Angela LaPorte (2004), says that near the middle of the 20th century, societal changes began to create negative consequences in American culture. The agrarian economy had declined resulting in age segregation. It became common for older members of a family to be institutionalized in retirement centers, nursing homes and public housing facilities, thereby losing touch with other family members. This separation promoted negative stereotypes, mistrust and fear of those outside one’s age group. Loneliness and a decline in self-esteem became more prevalent among older adults and children had a decrease in awareness of their cultural and historical background, and were developing a fear of aging.

Karen VanderVen (2004) argues that the 21st century has brought new kinds of interpersonal issues. People are living longer, creating an aging society. There is a large growth
of single parent and two working parent families. Children are in alternative care arrangements, meaning less time for parent child interaction, and behavior problems are on the rise. VanderVen suggests that intergenerational programs are the answer to bridging older and younger generations. She believes that the needs of elders and children can be matched to create reciprocal benefits.

LaPorte (2000) commented about the value of older adults to the education of younger children in a recent article.

The oral histories of these older adults, elicited from interviews, storytelling, and discussions about art, can become a valuable asset to art education. Their lives and their experiences of how the past relates to the present offer an alternative to children’s education that was at one time commonplace. In the recent past, grandparents and older relatives shared a much larger role in the everyday lives of children, but these family relationships have eroded during the last several decades. However, older adult artists and community members from local historical societies, senior citizens’ groups, and other area organizations can help reestablish a link with the past. Their interpretation of art related to local history and culture in art classrooms serves as a personal authentication of the past. (p. 40)

Roodin (2004) agrees that intergenerational program models may meet some universal needs of society members. Older adults need to nurture, teach, have a successful life review, share cultural mores and leave a legacy. Children have a need to be nurtured, learn from and about the past, have a cultural identity, have a positive role model and be connected to the preceding generation.

According to Zelkowitz (2004) studies have documented the therapeutic value of intergenerational activities and shown that adults can contribute to the healthy development of adolescents promoting community trust and connections. La Porte (2004) believes that most intergenerational research has been in fields outside of arts education. She states that the fields of gerontology and sociology document the reduction of age related stereotypes, the
prevention of depression and improvement of self-worth among older adults. La Porte (2004) writes that few studies have investigated the quality of learning or sharing between the old and young during visual art programs. There has been little formal study examining the educational potential and contextual learning implications for art education.

I am particularly interested in intergenerational students because of my personal involvement with members of different generations and my belief that the arts play an important role in a meaningful existence. This case study examined the implications of intergenerational learning for instructional practices in the visual arts.

While many facets of intergenerational learning are worthy of consideration, this study addressed intergenerational student learning that took place in an after school art program provided in collaboration with the Denton Independent School District’s Extended School Day program. The Extended School Day program facilitated by the Denton Independent School District is an after school program that provides academic and enrichment/recreation programs that seek to challenge all students who would benefit from extended school day activities. Goals for the Extended School Day program are to provide a flexible program that fits the needs of students and parents, develop each child’s confidence, leadership, and achievements through participation in educational and enrichment/recreational activities and to help students better relate to others and recognize the differences that make a person unique by working and playing together (Denton Independent School District, 2007).

The purpose of this study was to examine the implications of intergenerational learning for instructional practices in the visual arts. The specific research questions that were addressed are:
In what ways are values shared between intergenerational learners in an art class?

In what ways do intergenerational learners motivate each other during art production or art discussions?

In what ways do intergenerational learners demonstrate the characteristic of risk taking in art activities?

In what ways do intergenerational learners demonstrate cooperation and collaboration in an art making project?

These questions provided the focus for the qualitative case study which was the approach used for the investigation. Robert Stake (1997) describes a case study as a search for sweet water. He suggests that one “peers deeply into the heart of an issue” using a case study (p. 402). He compares the qualitative researcher to an early pioneer searching for water fit for human consumption. Stake says a case study researcher tries to develop an understanding through the description of what, where, how, when and why by using narrative and testimony. The researcher looks for what is meaningful to other researchers, while discovering what is meaningful to the participants in the case. The case is a dynamic, complex system with a story to be told. The story has recurring patterns and themes that are related to the issues under investigation (Stake, 1997).

The potential impact of this research is in serving the art educator and the broader educational community in the areas of curriculum development and pedagogy by providing examples of each for intergenerational learners.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Merriam (1988) says that researchers would not know what to do in conducting research without some theoretical framework for what is to be observed and what is to be collected in the form of data to guide them. For Merriam the theoretical framework is derived from the concepts, terms, definitions, models and theories of a particular literature base and disciplinary orientation and affects every aspect of the study. Anafara and Mertz (2006) point out that other researchers are concerned about too much emphasis being put on existing literature claiming that it may be an overpowering influence that determines the way phenomena are considered. Anafera and Mertz (2006) suggest that a theoretical framework should be thought of as a lens to study phenomena, providing language and attitude but used with imagination and flexibility. It is with a critical approach that I explored the literature that I felt was relevant to the study. The areas considered in the review of literature for this study were: lifelong learning, intergenerational learning, contextual learning theory and the role that art education may play in these areas.

Lifelong Learning

There is no one description for lifelong learning. Madeline Rugh (1998) writes that in the United States there has been little serious attention to lifelong learning. She says that American society perceives old age as a season without purpose, as a disease. She adds that as a response to industrialization life has been categorized into three boxes: (1) childhood and education, (2) adulthood and work, and (3) old age and retirement. Moody (2002) says that there is a need to develop a new image rather than the pessimistic, age-as-decline model. Moody says that
people move through a life course and encounter numerous experiences that may be influenced through individual variety and freedom of choice. According to Moody, aging opens the door to meaningful new roles and activities. Along this line of thought lifelong learning presents an optimistic way to look at the potential of aging.

Research by Diamond (1988) suggests that the human brain is capable of continued growth in old age. Diamond investigated the connection between brain anatomy and learning through several studies using animal models. She analyzed the brains of older rats that had been subjected to enrichment activities. The results of the studies demonstrated cortical plasticity or that the brain changes in size due to enrichment activities much like an exercised muscle enlarges based on exercise. Diamond writes that results from her studies provide both caution and hope for the aging human population. She says that they (research results) “caution us against entering into inactive life styles that reduce the sensory stimuli reaching our brains, and they (results) provide hope if we continue to stimulate our brains, for healthy mental activity throughout a lifetime” (p. 114).

The mission of the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics is to promote the highest quality of life and well being of all people as they experience aging (Sowers and Rowe, 2007). Hayslip and Chapman (2007) believe that a key component in aging well is the maintenance of one’s cognitive skills or how one thinks about oneself. Cohen (n.d.) conducted a study beginning in 2000 to determine how elders see their purpose, potential and productivity in later life. Over 100 men and women who were 60 years of age or older participated in the study. He asked participants, “What gives you a sense of meaning, a sense of purpose in life; what is important to you?” Among his findings he discovered that the desire for continuing
educational opportunities in varied forms including lectures, travel combined with an educational program, or new hands-on learning experiences was very high on the list of what is important to the retirement age individuals.

Cicero (c. 44 B. C. /1976) is quoted as saying:

...we should not cater to the body alone, but even much more should we attend to the mind and the spirit; for they too are dimmed in old age, if one does not, as it were, add fuel-oil to the flame. Our bodies, indeed, can be overburdened with too much exercise, but our minds are invigorated by exercising them. (p.9)

Cicero (c. 44 B. C. /1976) specifically addressed pursuing the arts as a means for a positive later life. He wrote:

The most fitting safeguards of one’s old age...are the arts and the performance of outstanding humane activities: if they are exercised during all phases of one’s life (no matter how long you may live), they produce marvelous fruits, not only because they remain with you always—even in the very last days of your life, but also because the awareness of a life well lived and the remembrance of many things well done is most agreeable. (pp. 5-6)

Ball-Gisch (1998) considers a lifelong learner as any individual who learns for personal fulfillment no matter their age. Soren (1998) suggests that lifelong learning includes skills of risk taking, problem solving, critical thinking, communication and collaboration. West (2004) explains that lifelong learning may be defined as more than adaptability or a remarketing of self as a commodity. He says that wage earning is not of primary importance for the lifelong learner. Rather, lifelong learning can provide an alternative to feeling overwhelmed, stuck and powerless. West suggests that lifelong learning is a process dependent on the help and support of others who encourage and challenge through risk taking.

As I reviewed research studies on lifelong learning I found that there were several motivating factors for older learners to engage in lifelong learning. Kim and Merriam (2004)
examined one-hundred, eighty-nine members of the Learning in Retirement Institute. The researchers wanted to know what prompted the older students to participate. While the reasons were varied the researchers found that cognitive interest was the strongest motivator for learning with social contact as the second most influential motivator. This descriptive study discovered that lifelong learning provided satisfaction for intellectual curiosity and fostered enjoyment of the learning process. The researchers cited the need for a longitudinal and qualitative study and one that considered a different context with the poor, minorities and immigrants being represented.

Lamb and Brady (2005) investigated the reasons that 45 members of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute gave for participation in learning sessions. Again, the reasons were multifaceted but intellectual stimulation and participation in a supportive community were two strong motivators that were given. The study found that participants were involved in building respect for others, enhancing self-esteem, a feeling of life enrichment, and spiritual renewal.

How the learning of older adults was impacting their lives was studied by Roberson (2006). He used a qualitative design to discover that the four adults under study used self-directed learning during their leisure time in retirement. For the older adults the self-directed learning projects were considered a significant part of their lives and seemed to lessen some of the negative aspects of aging. Roberson also found that the study participants displayed a commitment to financial responsibility and personal wellness.

Stanford (2006) used a phenomenological study to explore what it is like for 13 women, ages 75-91, to thrive in elder adulthood. She asked the questions: What is it like to thrive in elder adulthood? What do thriving elders think contributes to their thriving? What advice
regarding thriving in elder adulthood could they offer others? She discovered six patterns that emerged: (1) vital involvement and service, (2) desire to learn, (3) appreciation of basic life components—family, friends, health, home and financial security, (4) valuing honesty and responsibility, (5) positive attitude, and (6) reliance on faith. Stanford documented three significant findings based on her study. The first finding was that elders responded in a positive way to life challenges and the associated changes accompanying them. A second finding was that thriving elders were vitally involved in service to others. The third finding was that thriving elders held a high regard for learning with an open mind, receptive attitude and an eagerness to learn.

These research studies suggest learner characteristics that are illustrative of lifelong learners. An intellectual curiosity, the desire to be involved in the lives of others, and the resiliency to endure and adapt to challenges highly influence one to be a lifelong learner.

Intergenerational Learning

Intergenerational is a term that suggests the involvement of different generations or age categories. Davis (2007) says that it suggests an interaction, connection, linkage, joining, and sharing of and among different generations. Intergenerational learning implies the learning that takes place for members of different generations as they interact with one another. The literature suggests that there are typically three types of intergenerational programming. Larson (2006) characterizes these categories as elders serving youth; younger people serving elders and older and younger people serving together. The capacity for student learning to take place is applicable in all three categories.
Oelschaeger (1995) writes that the aging population is in the best possible position to share with younger generations the values of life. He notes that the over 65 age group of the late twentieth century has lived through a diverse array of experiences from Kitty Hawk to Hiroshima, WWI to the Gulf War, Buchenwald to Watergate. He states, “They (those over 65) have witnessed the remarkable achievements of Einstein and Mother Theresa, Mohandas Ghandi and M. L. King, Fleming and Jonas Salk. They (those over 65) have a crucial generational role to play in resetting Western Culture’s moral compass” (p. 200-201).

Moody (2002) notes:

It should be the special role of the elderly to be the moral conservators of that which has been and the most active proponents of that which will be after they are no longer here. Their indispensable role as conservators is what generates what I believe ought to be the primary aspirations of the old, which is to serve the young and the future. Just as they were once the heirs of a society built by others, who passed on to them what they needed to know to keep going, so are they likewise obliged to do the same for those who will follow them. (pp. 46-47)

Cairns and Dickson (1995) relate their fear of today’s children not learning from their elders the lessons of life, values and information about nature. They reflect on how more communication occurred between generations in the days prior to television when it was not unusual for a group of children to listen to those from an older generation tell stories of the past. Cairns and Dickson believe that today’s situation is a call to action for seniors. They state, “If we don’t communicate with our children and grandchildren our values and concerns for a sustainable future, then there is little hope” (p. 186).

VanderVen (2004) argues that the 21st century has brought new kinds of interpersonal issues. People are living longer, creating an aging society. There is a large growth of single parent and two working parent families. Children are in alternative care arrangements,
meaning less time for parent child interaction and behavior problems are on the rise. She suggests that intergenerational programs are the answer to bridging older and younger generations. She believes that the needs of elders and children can be matched to create reciprocal benefits.

Roodin (2004) agrees that intergenerational program models may meet some needs of society members. Older adults need to nurture, teach, have a successful life review, share cultural mores and leave a legacy. Children have a need to be nurtured, learn from and about the past, have a cultural identity, have a positive role model and be connected to preceding generations. A recent quote by Russell Baker (as cited in Conyers, 1996) states that “Children ought to know what went into their making, to know that life is a braided cord of humanity stretching up from time long ago” (p. 14).

Reciprocal benefits for senior and children in an intergeneration program are discussed by Conyers (1996) in an educational periodical. A program in 1992 in which Conyers was involved provided an opportunity for seniors age 65 and over to mentor students. The partnerships took place in elementary and junior high school computer labs, resource centers, lunchrooms, school offices and classrooms. Conyers says the seniors helped students with reading, writing or math. He adds that seniors and elementary students have many things in common such as loneliness and the constant need for reassurance as well as their fear of failure in relationships. These findings, according to Conyers, became part of the final report of the White House Conference on Aging and encouraged a commitment to build bridges between schoolchildren and seniors.
According to Zelkowitz (2004) studies have documented the therapeutic value of intergenerational activities and shown that adults can contribute to the healthy development of adolescents promoting community trust and connections. Larson (2006) reports that The Temple University Center for Intergenerational Education in Philadelphia has documented benefits for both older and younger participants in intergenerational programs. She says, “Older participants, for example, experience enhanced life satisfaction, decreased isolation, fulfillment and a sense of meaning, new and meaningful relationships and new skills and insights. Younger participants experience increased self-esteem and self-worth, improved behavior, increased involvement in school work, and a sense of historical and personal continuity” (p. 39). Collaboration and partnership are implied in intergenerational learning. Johnson (2002), a recognized authority on brain-compatible teaching discusses the value of collaboration between learners. Johnson writes:

Collaboration removes the mental blinders imposed by limited experience and narrow perceptions. It makes it possible to discover personal strengths and weaknesses learn to respect others, listen with an open mind and build consensus. Working together members of small groups are able to overcome obstacles, act independently and responsibly, rely on the talents of team members, trust others, speak up and make decisions. (p. 89)

Saltiel (1998) suggests that an increase in one’s perception of self-worth is an outcome of team learning. Learning accomplished through a partnership experience brings an increased awareness of the partner’s own capabilities and system of working. Students are more secure in the knowledge that they will succeed, thus elevating self-esteem.

The positive influence of even short term quality intergenerational contact on the attitudes of children toward older adults was documented in a study by Hannon and Gueldner (2007). The researchers used an experimental design to investigate the hypothesis that there is
a positive change in children’s attitudes toward older adults in an intergenerational setting that fosters intimate, pleasant contact where members of both groups develop common goals. The study was conducted using a nine-hour intergeneration program across a three to four week period. The study included 67 children and 17 older adults. The participants were recruited from the summer camp and senior group of a YMCA in Pennsylvania. Activities of the participants included introductory activities, small group bonding activities, journal writing and small group discussions. Hannon and Gueldner report that children who participated in the nine hours of quality intergenerational contact with older adults had significantly more positive scores on the attitudinal survey than did the children who did not participate in the treatment group. The researchers said that their study emphasized how quality intergenerational contact using music, storytelling and journaling established rapport between the generations and could be used as a precursor to other, more extensive intergenerational initiatives.

A study conducted by Kaplan (1994) documents how intergenerational cooperation served as a means for addressing community planning issues. Both younger and older community members participated in a program called Neighborhoods-2000. The study was conducted in six neighborhoods in New York State and Hawaii over a seven year period from 1987-1993. Senior citizens interacted with sixth grade students over a six month period in each location. The participants took part in exploration, communication and urban planning exercises designed to promote interest in a local neighborhood development issue. A qualitative design was used for the study. Special events were scheduled to provide educational, supportive and enjoyable experiences for residents of all ages. One of the special events was a community mural day. A school based curriculum of 99 lessons was developed for
the intergenerational group of participants consisting of a sixth grade class and a group of eight senior adult volunteers, ranging in age from 64-80. One component of the curriculum included reminiscence interviews. At the conclusion of the project many students and seniors acknowledged misperceptions that they had previously held about each other’s age group were now changed. Seniors and youth also discovered that they had numerous things in common and the study revealed that the participants learned to focus on the formulation of solutions. Kaplan (1994) says The Neighborhoods-2000 model highlights a pedagogical role for seniors other than tutoring or assisting teachers with special events. They engaged the students in dynamic conversations about community life- as it was, as it is, and as it could/should be. The senior adult volunteers were able to make important contributions to the students' learning about neighborhood realities and possibilities.

These two cited research studies (Kaplan, 1993 and Hannon and Gueldner, 2007) suggest there is a positive outcome for students who participate in intergenerational learning. My findings obtained through a case study of an afterschool, intergenerational art class adds to the body of support for the theory that intergenerational programming produces beneficial outcomes for the involved participants.

Contextual Learning Theory

Lifelong learning and intergenerational learning are illustrative of contextual learning theory. According to Johnson (2002) it is the relationship of parts or the context of components that provide meaning. One can therefore examine the relationship of components in the educational process in an effort to recognize potential for meaningful learning experiences.
Another element of contextual learning theory is the belief that the brain has the ability to give new information significance by tying it to existing knowledge. The brain weaves patterns forming connections that are developed through the relationships made within one’s immediate environment (Johnson, 2002). New pathways or dendrites pave the way for future meaning making. For new knowledge to make sense it needs to be placed within a context to which a student can relate. The learning environment can take place anywhere that students can engage in social, cultural, physical or psychological experiences (Center for Occupational Research and Development, 2007).

In Morgan, Bertera and Reid’s (2007) study the researchers combined inquiry-learning techniques from informal (out of school/free choice) science education with specially designed intergenerational programs that brought together youth and older adults for co-learning experiences. Using both a tutorial and a workshop approach children aged 5-13 were paired with older adults, aged 50 and above. One hundred and eighty-nine intergenerational co-learning workshops took place during a 3-year program. The workshops were held during non-school hours in out-of-school environments. In the tutorial approach the older adult assigned to a child as tutor worked with the child once a week, using books and activities based on module topics. A total of 1,471 tutoring sessions took place during the three year period. The findings from the study demonstrate that the intergenerational learning approach resulted in significant gains in science knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs for older adults and children. In nearly all variables measured, workshop participants reported statistically higher ratings compared to tutor participants in relation to learning about science, interest in learning more, positive attitudes toward science, views of the role of science in everyday life, and increased
perceptions that participation was a way of contributing to the community. At the conclusion of the intergenerational sessions older adults believed that they and the children with whom they worked benefited from the program and that both had learned something. Findings from the study showed that the children involved in the study felt that the co-learning approach was very appealing and the program had provided for significant science knowledge gains.

Morgan, Bertera and Reid (2007) found that the advantages of the workshop condition employed in their study was that the social environment could influence learning through mechanisms such as modeling, reinforcement, and establishment of social norms. They said that the co-learning approach provided an environment for each person to respect the learning of the other. The pair learned new information together and experienced a re-framing of their values. The result brought youth and older adults to a better understanding of each other’s vision of the future, society and each other.

Intergenerational Visual Art Programs

La Porte (2004) writes that few studies have investigated the quality of learning or sharing between the old and young during visual art programs. She says that most of the intergenerational research has been in the fields of gerontology and sociology. Published findings say little about the educational potential and contextual learning implications that intergenerational programs hold for art education. Sherman (2006) reiterates the lack of literature. She questions whether creative arts do or do not offer older adults opportunities for learning and if creative arts offer an integrative role in helping elders discover and build new skills, or make meaning of experience—qualities that would benefit intergenerational art education and foster lifelong learning.
Cohen (2006) conducted a study in 2005 to examine the influence of art programs on the health of elders. Cohen writes that the objective of the experimental study was to evaluate the effects relevant to general health, mental health, overall functioning and sense of well-being in older people caused by active participation in cultural programs provided by professional artists involved in visual and literary arts, music, and other cultural domains. The study was initiated in 2001. The 300 participants in the study were older adults 60 years of age or older who were living independently at the start of the study. Both the intervention and control groups at three participating sites had an average age of approximately 80 with an age range of 65-100 years. The participating sites were Elders Share the Arts of Brooklyn, New York; the Center for Elders and Youth in the Arts, Institute on Aging, San Francisco, California and the Levine School of Music, Washington, D.C. Baseline measures obtained via questionnaires administered face-to-face to both groups were very similar at the start of the study. Measures were then repeated yearly for two years. Cohen says that the results of the study indicate that the art groups in contrast to the control groups showed areas of actual stabilization and improvement apart from decline, despite an average age that was greater than life expectancy. Cohen suggests that the results indicate that community-based art programs run by professional artists can have a powerful positive intervention effect that appears to reduce risk factors that contribute to the need for long-term care.

Cohen’s study shows that there is a renewed sense of control and a high level of social engagement for older participants who are involved in art programming. This positive outcome may be expected for older adult learners in an intergenerational art program.
LaPorte (1998) conducted a seven month ethnographic study of an intergenerational art program in New York City’s Harlem. The purpose of the study was to understand the interactions between teens and senior citizens aged 65 and older. La Porte was a participant observer in the study. She writes that attitudes, values and beliefs were shared between homebound older adults and African American teenagers in the process of building community. During the after school art program in Harlem the elders recounted stories or oral histories of their lives that related to artworks. The younger members recorded the stories, and both participants collaborated on collages. La Porte’s intergenerational study provides implications for future intergenerational learning experiences and art education curriculum. She states in a recent article:

During the Harlem study, methods from oral history and material culture studies encouraged older adults to contribute historical perspective as living witnesses to the past. The candid testimony from their long lives informed the creation of collages representing biographical, cultural and historical themes from each senior’s life. Their rich experience and direct knowledge of the past that defines Harlem’s venerable history and cultural diversity animated a sympathetic appreciation among the high school students. Such use of oral history and material culture can stimulate an empathy and desire in students to understand the art of diverse cultures and times, and provides a valuable and informative perspective on its context. (LaPorte, 2000, p.6)

Erickson (1983) says that art history can be an enriching inquiry process when one interviews older friends and family members about a period of time or place while studying relevant artworks. LaPorte (2000) concludes that life experiences and ways of thinking and valuing when shared intergenerationally can foster insights and enrich the study of art. Her experience in the Harlem art project illustrates that point. She explains in the following excerpt:

Many of the older participants in my study had encountered experiences those portrayed in Palmer Hayden’s *Midsummer Night in Harlem* or Horace Pippin’s *Christmas*
Morning Breakfast and Saturday Night Bath. These works drew on the personal reflections of the older adults to validate the historical and cultural context of the artwork, to bring it to life. (p. 43)

Lawton (2004) used an epistemological action research approach to examine how intergenerational learners motivate each other. Lawton’s study, Artstories, considers the nature of learning and social relationships that evolve among three generations of women and girls, ages 14-82 years of age, during an art making experience. Memorable life events were shared through the participants’ personal story telling. Youth motivated elders by listening to the elders’ personal stories that were written into a narrative and then illustrated. Seniors motivated the teens by praising them and encouraging them in their creativity. Lawton says that the narratives served as a means of connecting people of different generations. Participants in the study who had an interest in art making combined in written text the collective experiences of the intergenerational group as one narrative. The participants then illustrated their story. All participants helped to shape the story and all participants contributed illustrations to the story. At the conclusion of the study Lawton writes,

Findings indicated that the seniors felt it important to praise the teens and encourage them in their creativity. The teens felt it was important to listen to and support the seniors’ wisdom and ideas. Within each group there was an atmosphere of caring, of watching out for one another. All left the project with a feeling of empowerment, having connected with someone different and created an artifact of personal and social significance to share with someone else. (p. 41)

Heydon (2007) conducted a 5 week naturalistic study to determine the language and literacy-learning opportunities between children and older adults. The implications of her study have significance for visual art programming with intergenerational learners. The case study took place in an intergenerational art class that is part of a co-located intergenerational
program at Providence Mount Saint Vincent in Seattle, Washington. Heydon included two
different intergenerational art classes in her study. The adult participants were drawn from
those who were relatively self-sufficient and lived in apartment-style accommodations, those
who lived in the neighborhoods and those who attended adult-day programs. The median age
of the adult participants was 85. The children participants of whom the median age was 4 were
members of the Intergenerational Learning Center art class at Providence Mount Saint Vincent.
Heydon examined the following questions: (1) What forms of collaboration occur among
participants? (2) How does this collaboration build individual and communal capacities? (3)
What kinds of learning opportunities arise for the participants? (4) What are the constituents
of the learning opportunities that can be created during intergenerational programs. The
dialogic interchanges between participants as evidenced in her research supports the
imaginative thinking that takes place for young and old a successful intergenerational program
and how are they organized?

Heydon reported rich descriptions alike in an intergenerational art program. The playful
attitude of older adults and children is illustrated as she describes their interaction with
mystery objects prior to drawing them. Heydon says that children and elders were presented
with a bucket of assorted plastic pieces. The teacher also showed photographs of post modern
architecture. The students discussed the objects, trying to identify what they were and how
they related to the architecture or what purpose each item might hold. The students
manipulated the objects trying them out as one might spin a top. An older student helped a
younger student trace her object on paper. One student commented that her object looked like
the Seattle Space Needle. Another student related that his object reminded him of a candle. An
older student added that her object looked like an archaic juicer. Another older student said that perhaps her item was a beach umbrella. Laughter was interspersed within the conversation. Heydon says that her video recorded data documents the exchange of thoughtful discourse between children and elders that continued for over one and a half hours. Heydon suggests that the lengthy attention of the students is illustrative of the positive atmosphere generated by intergenerational students. The acceptance and understanding for one another displayed among the children and elders through the art activities demonstrates the benefit of intergenerational learning in an art class.

Zelkowitz (2004) provides evidence of collaboration in a study that matched high school students with 80 nursing home residents. Zelkowitz used an ethnographic and phenomenological qualitative research approach to examine how participation in an intergenerational community service art project might affect the personal development of adolescents. He used two primary questions to guide his research: How might adolescent student artists’ involvement in the design and painting of a mural with residents in a nursing home affect their personal development? How might adolescents’ participation in voluntary community service help them develop into caring, community-minded adults? Participants included the art teacher, 21 high school students, a campus minister, 80 residents, an administrator and two physical therapy staff from a county nursing home. In Zelkowitz’s study the high school students developed relationships with the residents by visiting them after school and playing recreational games. They also took photographs of the residents to be used as resource material for a mural to be painted in the therapy room of the nursing home facility. Residents of the home, staff at the home, students, the campus minister and the art teacher
participated in the design stage of the mural. They collected images from magazines and calendars to help with planning the design. The participants discussed the theme that they wanted to convey in the mural and the high school students drew a pencil sketch. Over a six-month period students, staff and residents worked on the painting. Often residents of the home watched the high school students paint the mural. Zelkowitz says that there were some occasions that residents of the home, many who were confined to wheel chairs, also painted on the wall. Zelkowitz adds that the students were paired with residents and painted side by side to complete the background scene. Findings from Zelkowitz’s study document that intergenerational relationships are formed as a result of participation in the program. Zelkowitz records participants in the study as saying the following:

Taking part in such an experience led us to share our own stories and memories. Some friendships began, while others developed, respect was gained and given, laughs were shared and smiles filled the room... The mural project was challenging, empowering, eye-opening, enlightening, inspiring, fun, and history-bridging and a cooperative effort... I don’t believe any of us can walk away from this experience untouched. (p. 66)

Zelkowitz says findings from the study raise issues for further research. Are compassion and/or empathy for older people of value to adolescents as they move into adulthood? Does participation in an intergeneration art project lead adolescents to a more meaningful and productive adult life and encourage them to connect more with their community? Would older adults have the benefits of a prolonged life and/or better health as a result of social contact with adolescents?

The literature related to lifelong learning, intergenerational learning, contextual learning theory and the role that art education plays in these areas is limited in quantity. However, it
provides a starting point towards understanding the role of art education across the lifespan and between the ages.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study was to examine the implications of intergenerational learning for instructional practices in the visual arts. A qualitative research method, using the case study approach, was chosen to investigate the intergenerational learning that took place. The case for this study was intergenerational relationships of nine students ages 6 to 10 from the Denton ISD Extended School Day Program flexibly teamed with six older-adult volunteers ages 53 to 78 from the Denton community. Participants were engaged in art lessons through an intergenerational after school project for a six-week period.

A case study can be described as an early pioneer searching for sweet water. Stake (1997) uses the analogy to describe the qualitative methodology whereby one digs deeper than surface level to understand what is meaningful to participants and therefore meaningful to the researcher. He says in a case study the researcher uses narrative and testimony to discover the story to be told. Stake says the case study has patterns and themes related to the issues under investigation. I found that as I filled the role of researcher and art teacher, I was afforded the opportunity to watch what was taking place between seniors and children. Overhearing conversations between older and younger participants as well as being able to see and hear first hand their attitudes and actions conveyed with body language and voice intonation was like Stake’s search for sweet water that leads to understanding.
Sources of Data

A convenience sample was used to select the participants for this intergenerational art learning case study. While this was one of the limitations of the study, the sample provided useful information.

Participants

Children

Elementary participants were from enrollees in the Denton ISD extended school day program. The purpose of The Extended School Day Program is to extend the learning of the school day through enrichment opportunities. The program is more than a recreational outlet or after school day care. The Extended School Program strives to be a flexible program that services the needs of students and parents. Students work and play in ways that seek to develop each child’s confidence, and leadership abilities. Activities are designed to help students relate to others and appreciate each other’s uniqueness (Denton Independent School District, 2007). Students, K-5th grade, from the Denton, Texas, ISD Extended School Day program comprised the younger members of the study. Nine children, four girls and five boys, composed of two boys from Kindergarten, two boys from second grade, two girls and one boy from third grade, and two fifth grade girls made up the younger participants (Figure 1).

An effort was made to include both male and female students

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addie</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Compared river walk to cathedral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Distributed supplies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27
from each of the grade levels and to encourage all minority groups; however, only one student who participated in the study, a third grade girl, was Hispanic. The remaining participants were Caucasian. The ethnicity of the Denton Independent School population, according to the Texas Education Agency, is as follows: African American 12.2%, Hispanic 29.5%, white 55.3%, Native American .7% and Asian/Pacific Islander 2.3%. The district has 38.0% economically disadvantaged students; 15.5% have limited English proficiency, and 39.1% students are considered at risk (Texas Education Agency, n.d.).

**Older adults**

Active adults, fifty years old or older, from the Denton community, comprised the elder members of the study (Figure 2). A volunteer, convenience sample was generated from individuals who were from various organizations in the Denton area including area retirement
facilities, senior centers, local churches and arts organizations. Six volunteers made up the older adult portion of the case study. Ages ranged from 53 to 78 years of age. Every effort was made to include both male and female participants although only female participants made up the case study. All older volunteers were Caucasian.

All six of the seniors involved in my case study were living out Moody’s (2002) lifelong learning image where one looks at the potential of aging instead of delegating aging to restrictive life boxes that determine activities in which one should be engaged. Ms. Betty, one of my older adult participants, exemplified one of whom I would say was a lifelong learner. Ms. Betty at age 68 had an I-phone of which she said she had a “love hate relationship.” She maintained an active schedule working at a local university in the computer science department and she had joined our group with the desire to spend time with her granddaughter. Ms. Sandy could also be considered a lifelong learner. She celebrated her fifty-eighth birthday during our six weeks of study together. The reasons she gave for joining our class were to learn how to create a mosaic, the skill of which she planned to utilize on a personal table making project and she also wanted to interact with children. Ms. Millie, a 65 year old volunteer, had expressed to me a personal desire to maintain her cognitive function as one of the reasons she had joined the class. Research by Diamond (1988) indicates the brain’s capacity of continued growth in old age with mental stimulation and challenge. Ms. Sarah, age 78, had joined the class with a desire to learn more art skills. She had expressed a hope that we would be painting but decided to try out the group anyway because she enjoyed art making experiences. Ms. Phoebe, age 76, joined the class because she wanted to find an area of service in the community. West (2004) explains lifelong learning as an alternative to feeling powerless. Ms. Johanna, a 53 year old professor of
visual arts on the university level, valued lifelong learning for herself as she had recently completed her Master of Fine Arts degree at age 52.

The two learning groups of older adults and younger students were teamed in flexible one-to-one or one-to-two relationships with each other. They participated in activities that promoted relationship building and studio production. Curriculum for the class operated around the big idea of interdependence. Essential questions framed student understanding (Appendix A).

Researcher

I acted as facilitator for the intergenerational art project and served as participant observer for the research investigation of the case study. I am a practicing artist in the Denton community and have had several pieces accepted in juried shows. My experience as a teaching assistant on the university level in the drawing program continues to keep me informed of current practices in the arts and my thirteen years of teaching visual arts in the public school system have equipped me with an understanding of the classroom environment. My current interest in the interaction of older and younger learners stems from a personal connection of being a member of an intergenerational household. My youngest son, age 25 and my mother, age 83, both live with me. I also regularly have the privilege of interacting with my six preschool-age grandchildren.

Data Collection

Both older and younger participants took part in art making experiences that may be described as being comprised of two parts: (1) making friends and (2) making art. The six classes of my research study lasted about 90 minutes each and took place in the school
cafeteria. A detailed description of each day’s learning activities and objectives are included in Appendix D. Each day during the art program students reflected on photographs that I had taken on a recent trip to Spain. Older adults and younger students shared with their intergenerational partner their ideas about the photographs using prompts and questions that I provided (Appendix C). I observed the dialogue among partners as they shared personal likes and interests. The participants verbalized their commonalities and areas of uniqueness to each other and to the class body. Participants also wrote responses through the use of narrative, text and drawn images in their Memory Books, a book construction artifact created as part of the studio session.

The primary collection tools for the study were (1) classroom observations gained through participant observation, (2) formal and informal interviews with the participants, the coordinators of the Extended Day Program site and principal, and (3) participant responses in their Memory Books. While older adults and younger students were involved in the art class they were observed, interviewed, and photographed. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with the older and younger participants, Extended Day Program site coordinators and the school principal. Appendix C includes questions that were asked during the formal interviews. Interviews lasted no more than ten minutes and were conducted during and outside of class time. As teacher and participant observer I wrote personal field notes based on my classroom observations. I also did personal journaling following each class session to provide reflective information for that day. Memory books were collected from the participants for the purpose of providing reflections on experiences by participants. Data were supported by photographs that I took to document interactive moments among the participants.
Data Analysis

John Seidel (1998) describes qualitative data analysis as a process of noticing, collecting and thinking about interesting things. He suggests that the process is not linear. According to Seidel when one thinks about things one also starts noticing new things which prescribes collecting more things. The result is an infinite spiral. He says that the qualitative method is not only progressive, but it is also recursive. He says it is recursive because one part can call you back to a previous part. Seidel says the process is also holographic, or containing the entire process in each step. He states that when you first notice things you have already mentally collected and thought about those things. Seidel uses the analogy of working a jig saw puzzle to help explain qualitative research. He says after you sort the puzzle pieces into groups you inspect individual pieces to determine how they fit together and form smaller parts of the picture. Seidel is quick to point out that the jig saw puzzle analogy is limited because the relationship of how the puzzle fits together must not be lost while one is analyzing the individual pieces to determine to which group the piece belongs.

Seidel’s discussion on qualitative data analysis fits well with my intent in noticing, collecting and thinking about the pieces involved in the intergenerational after school art class. I noticed reactions, attitudes, and various behaviors of the participants. While the noticing phase took place I employed various methods to collect or remember what I was observing. Thinking about what I observed helped me to see emerging patterns.

The principal mode of data analysis was thematic analysis which used the research questions to guide the discovery of recurring themes. Analysis was done for the written personal field notes, the personal journaling, the interview responses, and the memory book
reflections. Candid photographs provided visual reminders of participant interactions. The approach I took when analyzing the data included using a color coding system. Each color represented a theme that could be related to the research questions. When Seidel (1998) compared the analysis process to the analogy of working on a jigsaw puzzle he said some of the pieces would be difficult to categorize. However, the sorting makes it easier to solve the puzzle. According to Seidel, the search for types and patterns helps the researcher create a comprehensive picture that points to emerging themes.

Validity

Aronson (1994) states that when gathering sub-themes, or coding, it is easy to see a pattern emerging. She recommends asking informants to provide feedback to check for clarity. This process adds a sense of credibility or validity to what the researcher discovers. I obtained feedback from the participants in the intergenerational art class as interviews were taking place and after recording my reflections of the six class experiences. I met with the senior participants as a discussion group on the last class day. They verified the accuracy of my interpretation of what took place during the intergenerational art learning. The feedback I received was then incorporated into the theme analysis. I provided an opportunity for participants to confirm my analysis by making a written report available to them. I received a positive response from the senior participants that my analysis was valid. I considered the applicable literature to draw parallels with my research finding as I considered implications of intergenerational learning for instructional practices in the visual arts.
Limitations of Study

Possible limitations of the case study include exchanges between participants that may have been overlooked due to my performing the role of art teacher and researcher simultaneously. Using a convenience sample of children in the Denton ISD Extended School Day program posed limitations due to the lack of diversity in the sample group. The volunteer aspect of the seniors involved in the study also constituted a limitation due to the fact that no older men took part. Pre-existing relationships between me and three of the elder participants may have produced a bias in my reporting. The fact that one of the children in the study was related to the school principal and was the granddaughter of one of the seniors as well as a brother and sister relationship among elementary participants may have produced bias. Other themes that emerged from the study that did not directly relate to the research questions were not considered in this project.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The aim of this research study was to examine the intergenerational learning relationships between older adults and children as they were teamed as partners in an after school art program in Denton, Texas, Independent School District. For purposes of reporting participants were given pseudonyms to protect their privacy. The case study involved a convenience sample of six older adults, ages 53 to 78, who interacted with nine elementary students, ages 6-10. A qualitative method of investigation that drew data from personal field notes based on classroom observations made by the teacher/researcher/facilitator for the art class was used. Data were also collected from formal and informal interviews with the older adults and children participants, as well as comments from the program site directors and school principal. Journal entries that participants recorded in their Memory Books were also examined. The data analysis focused on four themes built around the research questions: (1) the sharing of values; (2) cooperation/collaboration, (3) motivation and (4) risk taking/playing. These four themes related to the research questions that I posed.

Sharing of Values

Max Oelschaeger (1995) writes that the aging population is in the best possible position to share with younger generations the values of life. Cairns and Dickson (1995) relate their fear that today’s children are not learning from their elders the lessons of life, values and information about nature. The classes that made up my case study were designed to foster relationship building with the first part of each session dedicated to an ice breaker activity. Most of these activities were developed through an art prompt. An analysis of the data
revealed that the ice breaker activities as well as the studio portion of the art class generated opportunities for participants to share their values. As participants discussed commonalities and differences in their lives in regard to how they spend their time and their viewpoint on various topics they shared personal value systems. The communication prompted by art related conversations provided a starting point for older and younger learners to have something in common to discuss. Differences in experience levels, personal likes and dislikes, and in personality traits were noticed and celebrated rather than hidden and feared giving rise to the potential for positive social interaction among members of different generations.

Participants on the first day of class were asked to consider things that a photograph made them think about and to describe how they would look if they were doing what the photo made them think about. Students were encouraged to listen to each other as they shared, and they considered ways that they were like their intergenerational partner. I observed that the older adults and younger students took turns listening and verbalizing about their photographs with their partner and they were able to tell the class the things that they and their partner held in common. The studio portion of the first day consisted of older adults and students drawing images that could be used in a group mosaic which were representative of the older and younger students’ commonality. Drawings and text from the participants’ Memory Books revealed that the older adults and younger students had exchanged information and identified common characteristics. My field notes about the opening activity that took place during the first class meeting documented how the sharing of values took place through conversations. A scenario that describes the first day’s meeting follows:
The kindergarten and first grade Extended School Day children entered the brightly lit cafeteria and sat toward the back of the room on the red, white and blue tiled floor. Bold, blue letters spelled out jaguars on one wall. A frolicking yellow jaguar with black spots was painted on an adjacent wall. Heavy blue curtains framed a drop-down screen where the first power point slide greeted the class members to Making Friends and Making Art. The screen projection was raised just above a stage area where lockers and stage equipment were stored for school programs. Eight-sided folding tables were open and arranged along one wall of the cafeteria. The excited youngsters on the floor were actively spinning on their bottoms and playing patty-cake with one another. The teacher stood over the children encouraging them to sit quietly. Her cheeks puffed out on occasion impersonating a fish catching a bubble – the secret signal for children to become quiet and listen to instructions. Over to the side of the cafeteria was a group of four seniors huddled around a couple of tables. They were visiting pleasantly with one another. Mrs. Paul, the coordinator for the school district’s ESD program entered from two glass doors at the rear of the cafeteria. She introduced herself to the seniors and began explaining the ESD mission to the elders. It wasn’t long before the second through fifth grade ESD children arrived. They sat on the floor segregated from the younger students. The older group was reminded to put their back packs at the back of the room. The resident social director for two of the seniors, who were participants in the intergenerational art class, arrived to take pictures. The school principal entered the cafeteria. Her daughter and mother were taking part in the program. I called for everyone’s attention and explained that they were being invited to participate in a special after school class. Approximately forty students listened attentively. I told the children that today we would be giving them a sample of what the class
would be like. It would be up to them to return parent consent letters if they were interested in participating on the following days. To give the children an opportunity to meet the seniors more intimately we played a circle game. The seniors and some of the children sat in a circle with their plastic chairs facing outwards. The remaining members stood opposite those seated. At a designated signal the pair introduced themselves and told something they liked to do or felt they were good at doing. I gave a hand clap to signal that the one on the outside of the circle should move to the next seated member, grab hands, and begin to exchange with their new partner names and information. This continued for several minutes. At the end of the activity the younger and older members shared in the large group what they had learned. The students were able to associate things they had in common with members of the older generation. Interests in sports like football, basketball, soccer, art and cooking were common activities that the group shared. They drew their responses as ideas for a group mosaic. In the Memory Books participants drew pictures of people fishing, playing sports, and playing video games. Several students drew a jaguar on their paper suggesting that the school mascot was something all of the participants had in common because they all were meeting in the school building that the jaguar represented.

Ms. Betty confirmed my observations that values were being shared by class members as they discussed activities that they liked to do. She told me that she witnessed several of the Extended School Day children and several of the volunteers sharing things they had in common that would be good topics to include in the group mosaic.

Later when I interviewed Elyssa, a fifth grade participant, about what she remembered from the first day, she recalled the opening activity. She said that she learned that she and
several of her older partners liked to draw. She said that she and Ms. Sandy both liked to watch television. Elyssa told me about a funny commercial that she remembered Ms. Sandy sharing with her about talking vegetables. Elyssa also remembered that she and Ms. Sandy both laughed about the commercial sharing the same attitude about what was funny.

Several other times during the six classes that made up my case study seniors and children shared values. On one occasion Ms. Sandy shared her opinion about the danger of guns with Palmer. I overheard the conversation and recorded it in my field notes. Palmer mentioned that his Dad had two guns in the house and that he knew where they were. Ms. Sandy remarked, “And you know not to touch them, don’t you”?

Ms. Phoebe shared in an interview that she valued her own Grandmother. She said, “She was my life to be with.” Phoebe added that when she and her now deceased husband had young children and they were traveling, living in different communities, they would make it a point to find older members from the community to be like grandparents to their children. She wanted her children to learn from them. Now she wanted to be that kind of grandparent to other children. When Elyssa responded to one of my interview questions she said that she just liked talking to the older participants who she considered friends. She said that she wanted to know about them. She added that she really didn’t have older friends outside of the intergenerational class. Both Ms. Phoebe and Elyssa ‘s comments illustrate that they believed the conversational exchange between older and younger generations provided a natural format for learning and sharing from one generation to the other.

Roodin (2004) believes that children have a need to be nurtured, learn from and about the past, have a cultural identity, have a positive role model and be connected to preceding
generations. VanderVen (2004) indicates that the 21st century has brought new kinds of interpersonal issues. There is a large growth of single parent and two working parent families. VanderVen suggests that intergenerational programs are the answer to bridging older and younger generations.

Ruby’s comment about her mother made during an informal question and answer time is an example of the time restraints typical of a busy one parent household. Ruby said, “I like art. My mom doesn’t like to take time to make things. It frustrates her.” Ruby also shared that she and her grandmother who was also in the class saw each other a couple of times a week. Ruby said sometimes she would take things from her mother’s house to her grandmother’s house and she would stay at her grandmother’s house longer than intended. She and Ms. Betty, Ruby’s grandmother, exchanged knowing smiles. I asked Ruby if she minded sharing her grandmother with others in our art class. Ruby said that she didn’t mind. Ruby and her grandmother’s relationship is illustrative of how older and younger generations share attitudes, values and beliefs. Ms. Betty shared the attitude that Ruby was worthy of her time and patience.

According to Zelkowitz (2004) studies have documented the therapeutic value of intergenerational activities and shown that adults can contribute to the healthy development of adolescents. Ms. Sandy’s persistence is an attitude that she unconsciously shared with younger participants which could contribute to their healthy development. In my field notes I recorded that one day Ms. Sarah responded to Ms. Sandy’s attendance at the art class. Ms. Sandy had suffered severe bruising due to a fall just the day before class and Ms. Sandy had debated if her presence would upset the children. Ms. Sarah told Ms. Sandy, “Being hurt is part of life. Maybe
it is good to have children see how one responds to it.” I noted in my field notes that I thought the statement was very profound coming from a senior in a wheel chair. Ms. Sarah had commented previously during an informal interview that she didn’t think she was sharing any values with the students. My response to her at that time was that often we share values in ways other than verbally.

Seniors shared their value of helpfulness and knowledge building with younger students during one of the activities we did in class. On one occasion it was the goal for the participants to determine whether the photograph that I had given the elders and children illustrated an ancient time period, a modern time period or was from the medieval time period. Mrs. Betty shared her knowledge with her granddaughter, Ruby and a classmate, Theresa. Ms. Betty explained how an aqueduct brought water into a city. She also said that the lead that was often located in the aqueduct’s trough caused many people to get sick. Ruby and Theresa listened attentively. They both drew pictures of the ancient aqueduct of Seville, Spain. When asked what her picture represented at a later time, Theresa was able to explain how water traveled from a distance through the aqueduct to reach people of the city. Her explanation demonstrated that she had internalized the shared information.

Knowledge building was not restricted to what younger students experienced. Theresa shared with Ms. Betty a linking activity that required intergenerational partners to match up related characters. Several days after the exercise Theresa remembered teaching some things to Ms. Betty because according to Theresa, “those things weren’t around in the olden days.” Saltiel (1998) says that learning accomplished through a partnership experience elevates self-esteem. I heard this in Theresa’s confident tone as she explained to Ms. Betty who Sponge Bob
was. Elyssa also experienced a visible lift in self-confidence when Ms. Phoebe asked Elyssa to teach her how to fold her book pages using a lotus fold technique. Ms. Phoebe said that she had missed the earlier instructions and that she needed Elyssa to teach her because she did not know how to do the technique. The listening and engagement of older adults while younger students shared from personal experience illustrates that the value of lifelong learning was a valued attitude that was shared during the intergenerational exchange.

Another example of shared values happened when class members considered if borrowing ideas was appropriate in art. I recorded in my field notes how Ms. Sandy related to her partner that she liked to make quilts and that she viewed following a pattern like borrowing someone else’s idea. Ms. Phoebe shared with the class in group time that she looked at dresses worn by others when her girls were younger and determined how to sew a similar dress for her children. Elyssa’s brother, Chuck, shared that he had borrowed ideas before in chemistry class as he had worked in a collaborative group. The conversation generated through the discussions not only allowed students and elders an opportunity to consider their belief system regarding appropriation but, the dialogue also provided participants a context for future learning.

According to contextual learning theory, learning occurs only when students process new information in such a way that it makes sense to them in their own frame of reference (Center for Occupational Research and Development, 2007). The intergenerational sharing in my case study often set the stage for contextual learning. I recognized understanding was taking place for students when they could relate their experiences to new information. Ruby realized her grandmother had examples of Islamic art in her house. Ms. Betty confirmed that she had some pictures from India. Addie recognized that her recent visit to the San Antonio
river walk looked a great deal like arches she saw in a photo from a Spanish cathedral. Ms. Sandy understood an area in her hometown of New Orleans had much in common with a street in Barcelona. Chuck identified the red and white ablaq construction at the Grand Mosque in Cordoba as resembling a striped candy cane. The fact that participants in the case study were relating new information to everyday experiences testified that contextual learning was taking place.

With regard to the first research question – In what ways are values shared between intergenerational learners in an art class – the analysis of participant observation notes, the interviews, and the Memory Book revealed that shared values, contextual, and lifelong learning occurred in both conscious and unconscious ways among older adults and children in an after school art program. Data showed that participants consciously shared value systems during the process of discovering how they were alike, serving as adult role models and learning new information. Some unconscious ways in which this occurred was through the demonstration of patience, persistence and tenacity. Ms. Betty and Elyssa shared their beliefs of how they were alike during the first ice breaker activity and confirmed their opinions during interviews and responses in their Memory Books. An example of Ms. Sandy’s conversation with Palmer about how she did not like guns and felt it was important to warn him to stay away from them demonstrated her sharing of her value system. Ms. Phoebe’s desire to be someone a child could learn from and Elyssa’s comment that she wanted to learn from an elder suggested that both participants recognized that there was a sharing of values and that naturally occurred as older and younger generations interacted. My case study revealed that some value sharing was an unconscious act that was demonstrated through actions such as when Ms. Betty
demonstrated patience with Ruby in taking time for her and Ms. Sandy demonstrated persistence and tenacity when she chose to come to class despite suffering from a fall. Ms. Betty shared her appreciation of knowledge building when she explained how an aqueduct worked with Ruby and Theresa. The sharing of values was not restricted to mentoring by the older adults. Theresa and Elyssa both recognized the value of lifelong learning when they taught their senior partners from their own experiences. Ms. Sandy and Ms. Phoebe shared their belief that borrowing was acceptable and valuable when it came to creating art work.

Data collected from my participant observation field notes, formal and informal interview questions answered by participants and the written and drawn responses in Memory Books by older adults and elementary students indicated that values and were shared as an outcome of intergenerational learning relationships during the engagement of art making and art conversations.

Cooperation/Collaboration

Cooperation and collaboration among older and younger members of the intergenerational art class also occurred during the study as evidenced by the data analysis. An example was when Palmer took his assigned role as Ms. Sarah’s escort very seriously. He felt primarily responsible for pushing Ms. Sarah’s wheelchair into place. When another student pushed Ms. Sarah, Palmer outwardly showed his dejection with pouting.

Ms. Sandy’s cutting assistance for Tracy was another example of cooperation. My field notes recounted that Ms. Sandy cut sticky backed foam squares for Tracy to decorate the cover of his Memory Book. Tracy pocketed his toy car and began peeling the backing from the square pieces as he was motivated to work in tandem with Ms. Sandy.
Occasionally, someone preferred to work independently rather than cooperatively. Ms. Phoebe is one example. She gathered her pieces of sticky backed foam squares to construct her Memory Book cover at home; however, while I observed that she placed her foam squares in her purse to do at home she was quick to become engaged in other activities with group members such as pushing chairs to the center of the room and later joining younger students who were gluing mosaic tiles to a board.

Intergenerational participants readily offered their help and fulfilled assigned responsibilities when asked to do so. There were numerous references in the field notes of participants cooperating to fulfill tasks. Ms. Johanna took responsibility for calling members to the group mosaic tiling table on the first day of tiling and she demonstrated the gluing process to the groups. Ms. Johanna also showed me an alternative technique to teach the children on folding their lotus book. Ms. Phoebe facilitated the opening activity for me one day when I had to return home for another compact disk. On that day Ms. Phoebe provided opening instructions and had the table groups working quietly when I returned. Just as the older participants’ demonstrated acts of cooperation so did younger students take responsibility and rendered aide. Addie, a fifth grade student, stirred the grout mixture taking turns with other students as they prepared it on the last day for the group mosaic. Mike and Andy distributed supplies as instructed taking special care to fulfill each class member’s needs even when it required going out of their way to find a particular color that someone requested. Regularly the students set up and arranged chairs as they were needed. The younger students took turns waiting for one another to complete thoughts instead of interrupting, and they raised their hand for permission to talk during group time discussions.
The research question—In what ways do intergenerational learners demonstrate cooperation and collaboration in an art making project—is revealed through data that documented participants taking ownership in carrying out assigned and unassigned roles in the class body and fellow participants showing respect and courtesy toward them in their role. Collaboration was shown specifically through the data analysis as I found evidence that documented the collaboration of older adults and younger students joining ideas in group discussions and combining their efforts in creating a group mosaic.

An example of collaboration was illustrated by participants taking part in group discussions on the fifth day of class. Notes from my participant observation revealed that the participants discussed the idea of the class being a body and looked at bodies and statuary illustrated in the art of Spain. Each class member identified body parts that they felt they characterized and later drew them in the Memory Books. One student said that she was the legs of our class’ body because she supported the other class members like the legs support the body. Ruby’s mom sat in on the discussion and added that Ruby would be the heart of our group because she had a compassionate nature. Ms. Sandy said that I was the brain because I thought up the intergenerational class. The consensus of the group was that all members of the group were important and that each member had special contributions that they could make. Johnson says (2002), “collaboration removes the mental blinders imposed by limited experience and narrow perceptions. It makes it possible to discover personal strengths and weaknesses learn to respect others, listen with an open mind and build consensus.” Ms. Betty summarized the cooperation and collaboration that resulted as the intergenerational group...
engaged in art experiences. She said, “We are a mosaic of people, thoughts and feelings expressing ourselves with tiles on a board”!

Cooperation was apparent in the interactions of seniors and elementary students in the study. Palmer felt a sense of ownership in the role of escorting Ms. Sarah. Other students cooperated in assigned and volunteered roles such as when Addie prepared the grout for the group mosaic and Mike and Andy distributed covers for the Memory Books. Seniors also participated cooperatively. Ms. Johanna and Ms. Sandy filled the role of foam cutter and tiling monitor respectively. Ms. Phoebe served as teacher for an opening activity. Students and older adults treated each other with respect and courtesy providing each person an opportunity to talk without interruption. Collaboration was evident as students and seniors shared ideas and brain stormed through group discussions such as when the participants discussed the concept of the class being like a body. Cooperation and collaboration were both demonstrated in the intergenerational learning relationships in the after school art class.

Motivation

An analysis of the data revealed that intergenerational students motivated each other in a variety of ways. An example of the ways that intergenerational students motivated each other during art experiences is revealed in Chuck’s answer to an interview question. Chuck reflected on the art class and told me that he liked having seniors there because they appreciated his art and they showed him how to do things. Elyssa heard Chuck’s comment and said that she would like to have elders in other school classes like math or writing where they could help her out and tell her fun things to do. Ms. Sandy’s conversation with her daughter shows how she was
motivated to come to the art class despite her daughter’s advisement against it. I recall through my case notes the dialogue I had with Ms. Sandy. It was as follows:

Ms. Sandy met me at the glass double doors. Her face was swollen. Both of her eyes were black under her glasses. Her forehead was scraped. Her right eye was almost shut by the puffiness. In alarm I asked her what happened and if she was all right. She explained that she had fallen the day before and that she felt fine. She asked me if it was ok for her to come to class. I told her of course I was glad to see her. She and Ms. Sarah came through the doors. Ms. Sandy said that she came because she wanted to. In fact, she’d joined the class because of the art experience. She wanted to learn how to make mosaics. Ms. Sandy told me that her daughter tried to discourage her from coming saying that she would scare the children, but she wanted to come. I told her I was glad she made that choice.

The motivation that participants felt toward being committed to the project can be identified in Ms. Sandy’s situation. Ms. Phoebe’s decision to come to class even though she was missing an ice cream date with her daughter and grandchild is also an example of the motivation. Ms. Betty had joined the art class to have more time with her grandchild, Ruby, but she made it a point to come to class even though Ruby missed class due to a death in the family. The motivating factor of art experiences with intergenerational partners prompted Ruby to desire a longer time of engagement when she could have left the class early. Ruby’s grandfather on her father’s side arrived early to pick her up one day. While Ruby acted happy to see him she chose to finish her group activity before leaving.
Students’ excitement about the intergenerational art class showed their motivation in wanting to participate. Addie greeted me in the hall one day when I arrived early. She said, “Hey, Ms. Susan, I like Fridays! I like to go to my special class.” When Addie and Elyssa had to miss class due to family trips they expressed regret at missing our time together. The two Extended School Day site directors told me in informal interviews that they saw a visible excitement in the children who participated in the Making Friends and Making Art program as they talked about the intergenerational class. One site director said that Palmer and Tracy were continually checking to see what day it was and if it was art day yet. The other site director told me that his students couldn’t wait to go. The school principal, Ruby’s Mom, said that Ruby was having a ball in the class and that Ruby had asked if the class could be continued the following year. Ruby said that some other children in the ESD program did not want to be in the class because they felt it was boring. Ruby argued saying she didn’t agree. She liked art. In my field notes I found that there was one day when two girls who had been in the other ESD class wandered through the cafeteria. They stopped and admired the group mosaic we had been creating. They asked if they could join the group. I told them maybe another time. On the last day of the class Ms. Sandy told me that she wanted to have her seat reserved for the next class which she expected to be in January even though I did not know it yet. On several occasions I recall that Elyssa and Addie had to be coaxed to leave the cafeteria because the meeting time was over and it was time for the site director who was their escort to leave the building.

Lawton (2004) writes that in her study intergenerational participants developed an attitude of caring and watching out for one another. When their art project was finished the participants had a feeling of empowerment having created an artifact of personal and social
significance to share with someone else. Students in the Making Friends and Making Art class were motivated by the art making experience. On the fifth day of class almost everyone worked diligently on the mosaic fearful that it wouldn’t get finished. Andy being engrossed in his work on the mosaic lost sight of Ms. Sarah as he was gluing tiles. He looked genuinely relieved when he noticed her sitting across the table from him working on the mosaic. Ms. Sandy invited me to come to her retirement community saying that she’d help me during the next week to complete the mosaic. Ms. Betty said that she had tried to call me earlier in the week to express her concern that we wouldn’t finish. She told me to call her and maybe she could come over to my house to help finish the mosaic.

The research question—In what ways do intergenerational learners motivate each other during art production or art discussions—was answered in several ways as confirmed by the data analysis. Participants told of mutual encouragement given and received by their partners in regards to art making and decisions followed. Older adults and younger students showed evidence of being both internally and externally motivated as confirmed by attendance, excitement, and art engagement.

Numerous examples about how participants were motivated to action were recorded in the field note observations. Elyssa and Addie asked to take additional book pages home to complete in order to have them ready for the final class day. Another time a student begged me to allow him to complete his book cover during the next class meeting. On the day that the projector was not operating correctly and I had to show mosaic pictures from my lap top the students were nevertheless enraptured by the brightly colored forms and animatedly discussed them. When Ms. Johanna explained to Elyssa how to carefully spread glue on the glass mosaic
tiles for attachment, Elyssa listened intently and carefully placed them one after the other.

Andy asked for confirmation if what he did was all right as he worked on the group mosaic. I affirmed his color decision and he happily continued his design choice. Ms. Millie motivated one of the students with a gentle hug of compassion when the child felt she was not going to be able to have a cookie during our party on the last day. All of these examples document that participants were motivated to accomplish something because of the art and intergenerational interaction.

Looking at art, the art making experience, and the interaction of older adults with younger students served as motivating factors for participants in my case study. As we were wrapping up on the final day Ms. Millie continued to add the finishing touches on her Memory Book. She shared with another student who was sad about the class coming to a close that the child could look at her Memory Book and be reminded of the time they had spent together. Ms. Millie said that having a product at the end of the session was motivating for her. Ms. Sarah believed that the intergenerational class had been a success and shared that with others in an informal interview. Elyssa said that she had had fun and voted the class two thumbs up. Ms. Sandy asked Palmer if he was going to miss her coming. He ruefully looked at her and said, “Pretty much.” The data analysis documented the ways intergenerational learners experienced motivation during the art class. Ms. Sandy, Ms. Betty and Ms. Phoebe were motivated by their commitment to the class due to an internal drive but they were also motivated to participate because of the interaction between intergenerational class members and the art experience. Chuck and Elyssa were examples of students who specifically enjoyed the engagement with older adults and were motivated and encouraged by their presence. Addie, Elyssa, Palmer,
Tracy and Ruby were students who demonstrated excitement and motivation in coming to the class and regret at having to miss the class. Ms. Millie was motivated by the art produced in the class. Motivation in the intergenerational art class was further evidenced through participants’ attendance, participants’ suggestions to continue the art-making experience outside of class time and the participants’ desire to repeat the class.

**Risk taking/Playing**

The data were also analyzed with regard to the risk taking or a sense of playfulness that occurred among the intergenerational learners. Similar to Heydon’s study (2007) participants exhibited a playful attitude as they interacted with each other. Elyssa commented in her reflections of the class during an interview that her older friends told her fun things to do. Ms. Johanna expressed the importance of play during a group discussion on important things we as a body should do. Ms. Millie said that she joined the intergenerational class because she needed a break from her usual self absorption in her work. Ms. Phoebe said, “Being with the children makes us feel younger.” The comments of these participants documented that risk taking or playing was seen as a viable activity by participants that was encouraged through intergenerational interactions.

A conversation between Palmer and Ms. Sandy illustrates the playful exchange between a younger and older friend. Palmer began describing to Ms. Sandy how he was a skilled hunter with a knife after Ms. Sandy told him she didn’t like guns. Ms. Sandy gave him audience listening animatedly to Palmer’s exploits. Ms. Sandy called me over to their table and encouraged me to join in the playful dialogue of the kindergartener. She said, “Did you know that Palmer is a skilled knife warrior”? Ms. Sandy asked if he used a Bowie knife to which
Palmer responded no, it wasn’t a boomerang that he was using. Ms. Sandy chuckled and tried to clarify that she had not said boomerang.

Another occasion exemplified playfulness when Palmer decided Ms. Sarah needed to go for a ride in her wheelchair. Palmer pushed the wheelchair away from the meeting tables into the center of the cafeteria. He picked up his pace almost as if he and Ms. Sarah were running around in circles. Ms. Sandy called Palmer back to the grouped tables saying that Ms. Sarah was her friend and it was time for her to sit beside her now.

The playfulness exhibited in the intergenerational class often translated itself into art making. Ms. Sandy chose to not put on the plastic gloves provided for grouting the tile. She expressed that she wanted to feel the texture of the paste. She pushed the sticky substance across the face of the mosaic into the cracks between the tiles openly exhibiting her enjoyment. Palmer dangled his over-sized gloves in the air saying his grout encrusted plastic gloves made him look like he had monster hands. I took pictures to record the playfulness of the participants.

Ms. Johanna demonstrated playfulness in writing her Memory Book journal entries. She made pictures out of her word text to describe the concept implied such as her word hug was created with two embracing letters. Playfulness was also depicted in the self expression of many of the child artists. Often pictures described what students saw in photographs. One of Palmer’s drawings accurately resembled a Romanesque castle. The castle was depicted through playful swirling lines.

An analysis of the data collected through participant observation, Memory Book journal entries, interviews and photographs supports the fact that playfulness or risk taking occurred in
this study, Elyssa, Ms. Johanna, Ms. Millie and Ms. Phoebe talked about the fun that was a result of intergenerational interaction. The conversation between Palmer and Ms. Sandy illustrated the idea of play as they discussed Palmer’s imaginative impersonation of a skillful knife warrior. Palmer’s wheelchair circling with Ms. Sarah enjoying the ride was an example of playful risk taking. Ms. Johanna’s and Palmer’s Memory Book responses showed examples of playfulness as it is related to self-expression in art. Finally, the kinetic and tactile experience of grouting the group mosaic was facilitated through the avenue of play. In consideration of my research question that asked in what ways do intergenerational learners demonstrate the characteristic of risk taking in art activities I found that the data analysis revealed several ways. Play was exhibited in the art making process, improvisation occurred spontaneously in conversations and mundane tasks were transformed into slightly reckless adventures.

Summary

Four themes related to the four research questions were evident in this research study. With regard to value sharing the data revealed that values were first shared through dialogue and written or drawn responses in regard to commonalities between the generations. It was also discovered that anecdotal conversation could lead to the sharing of value systems such as the danger of guns. Older adults and children in this case study recognized that shared values are often naturally occurring products of intergenerational interaction prompted by unconscious behavior. Participants recognized that lifelong learning and knowledge building were not age restrictive. The data also revealed that borrowing ideas was acceptable and valuable for certain purposes, including art making. The study also confirmed that contextual
learning experiences were established through the interaction of older and younger participants involved in art activities.

It was evident that cooperation, the second theme, was apparent in the interactions of seniors and elementary students in this case study. Assigned and volunteered roles for intergenerational participants engendered feelings of pride, resourcefulness and respect. Collaboration was also evident as students and seniors shared ideas and brainstormed through group discussions.

In the area of motivation, my third theme, the data revealed that some motivation is derived from an internal drive. Other motivating factors were the interaction between intergenerational class members and the art experience. Motivation in this intergenerational art study was evidenced through participants’ excitement and attendance, participants’ suggestions to continue the art-making experience outside of class time and the participants’ desire to repeat the class.

Playfulness or risk taking was also demonstrated in this study. Participants described intergenerational interaction as fun. Conversations provided opportunities for animated role impersonation. Daily activities offered an element of risk taking and art responses demonstrated a freedom in self-expression.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION
The Problem

Near the middle of the 20th century, societal changes began to create negative consequences in American culture. The agrarian economy had declined resulting in age segregation. It became common for older members of a family to be institutionalized in retirement centers, nursing homes and public housing facilities, thereby losing touch with other family members. This separation promoted negative stereotypes, mistrust and fear of those outside one’s age group. Loneliness and a decline in self-esteem became more prevalent among older adults and children had a decrease in awareness of their cultural and historical background, developing a fear of aging. (La Porte, 2004). Roodin (2004) believes that intergenerational program models may meet some of these universal needs of society members. Older adults need to nurture, teach, have a successful life review, share cultural mores and leave a legacy. Children have a need to be nurtured, learn from and about the past, have a cultural identity, have a positive role model and be connected to preceding generations. According to La Porte (2004) most intergenerational research has been in fields outside of arts education. She states that the fields of gerontology and sociology document the reduction of age related stereotypes, the prevention of depression and improvement of self-worth among older adults. La Porte also notes that few studies have investigated the quality of learning or sharing between the old and young during visual art programs. More research is needed on the role that intergenerational learning plays in art education programs as evidenced by national
research agendas in the arts (Goals 2000 Arts Education Partnership, 1997, and NAEA Commission on Research in Art Education, 1994).

Aim of Research Study

The aim of this research study was to examine the intergenerational learning relationships between older adults and children as they were teamed as partners in an after school art project. Through a qualitative investigation using a case study methodology this study examined six after school art classes that were initiated through the Extended School Day Program in the Denton, Texas Independent School District. The research questions considered in the study were:

- In what ways are values shared between intergenerational learners in an art class?
- In what ways do intergenerational learners demonstrate cooperation and collaboration in an art making project?
- In what ways do intergenerational learners motivate each other during art production or art discussions?
- In what ways do intergenerational learners demonstrate the characteristic of risk taking in art activities?

A convenience sample of nine children in kindergarten through fifth grade were teamed with six volunteering, active adults, ages 53 to 78. I was a participant observer by filling the role of art teacher and researcher for the project. Data for the study were collected from field notes of my observations and from participants’ reflections, written and drawn in Memory Books. Interviews, both formal and informal, were conducted with the school principal, site directors,
children and elders involved in the research study. The information generated through the data collection process was validated by elder participants with regard to its accuracy.

Data Discovery

The principal mode of data analysis for this study was thematic analysis that focused on the research questions. Thematic analysis was done for the written personal field notes, the personal journaling, the interview responses and the Memory Book entries. Photographs provided visual reminders of intergenerational interaction. The four themes were value sharing, cooperation and collaboration, motivation and risk taking or playing.

Data from the case study revealed that values were first shared through participants’ dialogue and evidenced through participants’ written or drawn responses in regard to the generations’ commonalities. It was also discovered that anecdotal conversations lead to the sharing of value systems such as the danger of guns. Older adults and children in the case study recognized that shared values were often naturally occurring products of intergenerational interaction prompted by unconscious behavior. An example was the perseverance that an older participant exhibited unconsciously yet the trait was recognized and considered desirable for immolation by a younger participant. The value of lifelong learning and knowledge building was recognized by participants in the case study as a benefit that was not age restrictive. Research revealed that participants believed that borrowing ideas was acceptable and valuable for certain purposes including art making. The study also confirmed that contextual learning experiences were established through the interaction of older and younger participants involved in art activities.
Cooperation, the second theme, recognized the interactions of seniors and elementary students. Assigned and volunteered roles for intergenerational participants engendered feelings of pride, resourcefulness and respect. Collaboration was also apparent as students and seniors shared ideas and brain-stormed through group discussions.

In the area of motivation, the third theme, it was discovered that some motivation is derived from an internal drive. The interaction between intergenerational class members and the art experience itself also served as motivating factors for participants. Evidence of motivation in this intergenerational art study was documented through participants’ excitement and attendance, participants’ suggestions to continue the art-making experience outside of class time and the participants’ desire to repeat the class.

The fourth theme, playfulness or risk taking, was clearly demonstrated. Participants described intergenerational interaction as fun. Conversations provided opportunities for animated role impersonation. Daily activities offered an element of risk taking, and art responses were demonstrated with a freedom in self-expression.

The major limitations of this case study were in the role I played as teacher-researcher and the use of convenience sampling. Although every effort was made to include both male and female participants in both the younger and older populations represented in the case study, only female older adults were involved.

Implications

This research has implications for the art educator and the broader educational community in the areas of curriculum development and pedagogy. Data from the study provided examples of motivation, value sharing, cooperation and risk taking that took place
between participants in the after school art class. This research suggests that intergenerational interaction provides a meaningful environment for student learning in art that may be similarly experienced in other contexts. The study also suggests that art discussions and art making experiences may be useful in generating relationships between older and younger generations. Likewise, the data support the fact that interaction between older and younger generations can enhance art discussions and art making experiences. These results provide insight for visual art educators and the educational community at large for developing curriculum and appropriate pedagogy for meaningful intergenerational experiences. It is my hope that many of the benefits recognized in this case study are currently evident in America’s classrooms. Unfortunately, the intergenerational component is not as common of an occurrence. The aging of the world’s population dictates that it is imperative that progressive educators seek to eradicate negative stereotypes and the fear of aging that follows today’s commonplace segregation of the generations. Intergenerational interaction as specified in this case study holds the promise for mutually satisfying relationships among older and younger populations.

Based upon this study further research is needed in several areas: investigations of a variety of populations including minority populations and the frail elderly; determination of ways that intergenerational interaction may provide a meaningful environment for student learning in other subject areas using art as an interdisciplinary medium; and exploration of an intergenerational art class conducted as part of the regular school day curriculum or at the site of a retirement center or long term health care facility warrants further research.

VanderVen (2004) says that the 21st century has brought new kinds of interpersonal issues. An aging society and changes in the American family structure have caused many to
consider the merits of intergenerational relationships. This research study documents the mutual benefits for older and younger participants of intergenerational art experiences.
Figure 1. First class day circle ice breaker.

Figure 2. Tiling work on group mosaic.
Figure 3. Folding memory book pages.

Figure 4. Grouting group mosaic.
Figure 5. Memory book page responses.
Figure 6. Group mosaic.
Unit Goal

• Big Idea of Interdependence guided student learning.

Essential Questions

• How do intergenerational students demonstrate interdependence?

• What are examples of interdependence that may be illustrated in the art of Spain?

• How can creating a mosaic be an example of interdependence?
APPENDIX B

ICE BREAKER TEMPLATES
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mosaic Template</th>
<th>Has two brothers</th>
<th>Plays a musical instrument</th>
<th>Has at least one sister</th>
<th>Has brown eyes</th>
<th>Plays a sport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Likes to ride bikes</td>
<td>Speaks two languages</td>
<td>Loves to read</td>
<td>Is wearing tennis shoes</td>
<td>Has an unusual pet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has never broken a bone</td>
<td>Enjoys drawing</td>
<td>Made their bed this morning</td>
<td>Likes ice cream</td>
<td>Has been to a foreign country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had a birthday in the summer</td>
<td>Has never ridden a horse</td>
<td>Has played video games</td>
<td>Likes to swim</td>
<td>Has slept in a tent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has never been to the zoo</td>
<td>Has skated</td>
<td>Has planted a garden</td>
<td>Was born in Denton, Texas</td>
<td>Can sing “Twinkle Twinkle little star”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Linking Couples

- Laurel
- Abbott
- Lone Ranger
- Humpty Dumpty
- Lavern
- Jack
- Cream
- Fred
- Tweety Bird
- Sponge Bob
- Garfield
- Charlie Brown
- Raggedy Ann
- Burt
- Peanut Butter
- Cheese
- Shoes
- Roadrunner
- Dora
- Ben
- Tonto
- Jill
- Sylvester
- Costello
- Lucy
- Jelly
- Wile E. Coyote
- Hardy
- King’s Men
- Sugar
- Barney
- Socks
- Crackers
- Shirley
- Jerry
- Patrick
- Diego
- Odyee
- Andy
- Ernie
APPENDIX C

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS
Day 1

Students may respond to open ended questions on their Memory Book pages.

- Describe what you see in your photo.
- What do you notice that is not in the picture?
- What do you think of when you see the photo?
- Describe how the photo reminds you of something you like to do or wish you could do.
- Describe how you would look if you were doing what you mentioned above.

Share your picture and thoughts with a new friend from a different generation. Be prepared to introduce them and their ideas to the group.

Day 2

Students may respond to open ended questions on their Memory Book pages.

- Describe what you are looking at in the mosaic photo--consider shapes, colors, patterns, variety, and subject.
- Where have you seen mosaics before?
- If you were a mosaic what would you look like?
- Would you be a recognizable subject?
- Would you have a dominant color or colors?
- Would you have more straight or curvy lines?

Share your answers with someone from a different generation.
Day 3

Students may respond to open ended questions on their Memory Book pages.

- Determine if your photo is an early Roman Ruin; Architecture from the Medieval Time Period; or an example of Modern Art.
- Find a partner from another generation who has a photo from a time period different from you. Answer the photo questions and match the couples in the link up activity.
- Describe what you see in your picture.
- From what time period do you think your picture is from?
- Have you ever seen anything like your picture before?
- What does your photo have in common with your partner’s photo?

Day 4

Students may respond to open ended questions on their Memory Book pages.

- Look at recent photo of self and partner. Describe what are characteristics of a body?
- Are there body parts that are unimportant?
- What do you do to make your body strong?
- What are things that a group can do to make their body strong?
- What part do you play in our class’ body?

Day 5

Students may respond to open ended questions on their Memory Book pages.

- Describe what you see in your photo.
- Have you ever seen something like your photo somewhere else?
• What do you think it would mean to borrow someone else’s ideas to make art?
• How have you borrowed and given ideas in this class?

Day 6

Students may respond to open ended questions on their Memory Book pages.

Quote by artist, Georgia O’Keeffe

“Nobody sees a flower really; it is so small. We haven’t time, and to see takes time—like to have a friend takes time”.

• Why do you think O’Keeffe thinks having a friend takes time?
• Look at your nature picture. Describe what you see.
• What things have you learned to see about your new friends from a different generation?
APPENDIX D

DAILY OBJECTIVES
Day One

The objective for the first day was to recognize characteristics and experiences that intergenerational students held in common. Students were provided with a photograph taken from the teacher’s trip to Spain. Students described on a journal page what they saw in their photo and indicated what they did not see in their photo. They then considered things that the photo made them think about and described what as an individual they would look like if they were doing what the photo made them think about. After reflecting on their photo, they shared with their intergenerational partner their responses to the photograph with the intent that they would share with the class what their partner had told them. Students were encouraged to listen to each other as they shared and to think about ways that they were like their partner. The expectation was that the students would take turns listening and verbalizing about their photographs with their partner and be able to tell the class the things that they and their partner held in common. The studio portion of day one consisted of students drawing images that could be used in a group mosaic which were representative of the students and illustrated things that the students had in common. The expectation was for students to draw images that signified the students and verbalize whether the represented image was something that the older and younger students held in common.

Day Two

The objective for day two was for the students to recognize ways that they were the same and different from their intergenerational partner and how the relationship of sameness and difference could be an advantage. In preparation to notice similarities and differences
students were given a photo of a mosaic that originated in Spain. On a journal page students described what they were looking at in the mosaic. They were encouraged to consider shapes, colors, patterns, repetition, variety and subject matter. Students indicated where they had seen a mosaic before and compared themselves to a mosaic, indicating whether they would be a particular subject, what colors they would include, and the quality of the line work in the mosaic. Students shared their answers with their intergenerational partners. Next students were given a template that listed several definitive characteristics that related to the learners. Students colored corresponding squares that listed attributes that related to them. The purpose of this activity was to determine if the students could recognize the similarities and differences in themselves and their partners and in the composition of the mosaics in the photos. Students were encouraged to determine what would be missing if the mosaic in the template and in the photos were all the same color or shape, having no variety. The studio component for day two was for the students to design a mosaic-like cover for their journal pages, or “Memory Book”. The cover was constructed from sticky back foam squares that the students glued on to a 4.5” x 4.5” foam sheet of contrasting color. The purpose of the studio portion of the class was for the students to design the book cover using sticky back foam squares to illustrate patterns with variety and repetition similar to a mosaic.

Day Three

The objective for day three was to determine the value of giving and accepting help from others. Students were given a photo that was an example of a Roman ruin located in Spain, architecture from the medieval time period of Spain, or an example of modern art that may be seen in Spain. Students were asked to determine what time period their art photo
represented, using prior knowledge that they may have. Students answered on a journal page indicating what they saw in their picture; they explained the time period they thought their photo represented, and wrote if they had ever seen anything like their picture previously. The students then conferred with their intergenerational partner sharing answers and comparing or contrasting characteristics between the photos. Students were considered successful in the activity if they used their prior knowledge and that of their partner to arrive at reasonable conclusions regarding the art works and were able to share with the class the decision making process that they had used to determine the time period. A second activity that combined linking pairs was given to the intergenerational partners. They were asked to work together to link the two columns. Students were considered successful if they worked collaboratively with their partner to arrive at reasonable answers for linking the pairs. The studio portion of the day involved students working together to glue tiles to a group mosaic constructed from their previous designs. If they worked cooperatively and collaboratively to apply the tiles to an agreed upon area they were considered successful.

Day Four

The objective for day four was for students to identify and exercise characteristics that promote team work. Students were shown a PowerPoint presentation regarding bodies. Images of themselves and their intergenerational partners were included. After looking at the photos, students were asked to list on their journal page parts of a body. Additionally, they were asked to determine if there were body parts that were unimportant and what one might do to make their body more efficient or strong. Students were encouraged to look at their position in the class as being a part of a body and what role their part might play in the class’ body. Students
dialogued about things that might make their class’ body strong. If the students were able see themselves as a contributing member of a group and were able to identify characteristics that promoted teamwork, they were considered successful. To expand on the idea that there are different kinds of groups or bodies with different purposes, photos of human figures from the art of Spain were shown to the intergenerational students with teacher explanations that some of the bodies were used for worship or to promote reverence, some to instill honor, some to provide a sense of protection, some to tell stories, and some to help determine values. The objective of the studio portion for day four was for intergenerational students to work together as teams to lay tiles in the group mosaic. If they worked cooperatively and collaboratively to apply the mosaic tiles to the agreed upon design they were considered successful.

Day Five

The objective for day five was for students to recognize the value of building upon another’s strengths. Students were shown photos of Islamic art from Spain and were asked to describe on their journal page what they saw in the photo. They were also asked to indicate if they had seen something like the photo somewhere else. After sharing their answers regarding the photographs, the teacher explained that the Islamic art of Spain was the product of people building on their predecessor’s art forms. Students were asked when it was acceptable to build upon or borrow someone else’s ideas. If the students described situations where beneficial outcomes were the result of building upon another’s strengths, they were considered successful. The objective of the studio portion of the class was to build upon the previous days’ tile work by applying additional tiles to the mosaic. Students were successful if they built upon the previous days’ tile work by applying additional tiles to the mosaic.
Day Six

The objective for day six was for students to take the time to notice and appreciate the little things about others. Students were provided with images of nature from Spain, blooming potted plants on the tables, and the Georgia O’Keeffe quote, “Nobody sees a flower really; it is so small. We haven’t time, and to see takes time—like to have a friend takes time.” They were asked to write on their journal page what they noticed in the nature images and plants. They also responded as to why they thought O’Keeffe would say having a friend takes time. Finally, students were asked to indicate what things they had learned to see about their intergenerational partner. If the students were able to notice and identify small details about their nature photo and recognize appreciable characteristics about their intergenerational partner, they were considered successful. The studio portion of the day was for students to complete their Memory Books by lotus folding their journal pages and gluing them into the books. The students were considered to be successful if they attached the pages in such a way that they could be folded and unfolded providing a means to remember the things they had talked about and done with their intergenerational partner. The grouting for the group mosaic was also accomplished on the final class day. If they applied the grout mixture in such a way that it filled in the spaces between the mosaic tiles, they were considered successful.
APPENDIX E

QUESTIONS ASKED OF PARTICIPANTS
Reflections on the IG Class

Elder Participant (Write on the back if more room is needed.)

1. Do you feel like during your time in the IG (Intergenerational) class you had an opportunity to share attitudes, values and beliefs with your younger partner? If so please give an example.

2. Do you think that an IG art class should promote sharing attitudes, values and beliefs? Why or why not?

3. Do you feel like during your time with your partner you were motivated during the art production or art discussion? Please explain.

4. Do you recall providing motivation for your partner? Give an example.

5. Do you see yourself or your partner as a risk taker when it comes to art work? If so, give an example.

6. Do you feel like you and your partner cooperated and collaborated with each other during your art making and discussions? Please explain.

7. Did you learn anything about art during your time in the IG class? Did having a younger partner have an impact on how and what you learned? Please explain.
8. Please tell what you enjoyed about working with a younger partner during the IG class.

9. Have you told anyone else about your experiences in this IG class. What did you say?

10. Would you be willing to participate in another IG class at some later time? If no please share your reservations.

Feel free to include any other comments that you feel would help me to provide a better IG learning environment. Thank you for your time!
Reflections on the IG Class

Younger Participant

1. Do you think that you have changed your opinion about anything since you have worked with an older person in this art class? In other words do you have any different values, attitudes or beliefs than what you did before working with your partner?

2. Do you think that you were encouraged or motivated by your partner during the art class? Or can you think of a time that you motivated your older partner?

3. Do you see yourself as taking chances, or trying something different from what is expected when it comes to art work? Give an example.

4. Do you think that you cooperated with your partner or took turns doing things with your partner? Did you divide up responsibilities? Did you agree together on ways to do things or did you or your partner always seem to do things your own way?

5. Did you learn anything about art in this class? Did having an older partner make any difference as to your learning?

6. What did you enjoy about working with your partner?

7. Have you told anyone else about your experiences in this class? Who did you tell and what did you say?
8. Would you like to have an older partner again in a class? Please explain.

Anything else you would like to say?
REFERENCES


Intergenerational links in art education (pp. 2-14). Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.


